BALLOONS

In black plastic bags
tied at the top
they were buried.
Their faces
swollen with death
rise in my dreams.
I was seventeen
when I read of them:
young boys, young men
lured to a house in Texas.
Their penises were filled
with excited blood:
first hard then soft they became
as Death with its blistered lips
kissed them one by one.
They were grapes
on Death's parched tongue.
In plastic bags
tied at the top
they were buried.
Twenty-five of them
and more unclaimed
young boys, young men.
For a long time
I was afraid
to trust loving a man.
For a long time
I retreated to women.
But it was like dancing

following a pattern of steps
painted on the floor.
Now, the awkward dancing is over.

For three days
I have walked
by a dark gray house
at the end of my street
where lives a man
out of whose home I have seen
young boys, young men
coming and going
coming and going.

And for three days
from the second-floor windows,
music from dusk to dusk
has fallen like petals
of black roses
softly to the ground.

But tonight,
evening of the third day,
I call the police
and tell them
not about faces
rising like balloons.
I tell them instead
about music,
about petals from black roses
falling softly to the ground.
Perhaps they will understand.
Maybe they will
come to my street
and knock at the door
of the gray house